



## 3.1.3 Descriptions of the nine aspects of wellbeing



### Living faith

Our faith in God and the way our daily lives are shaped by it

The **Living faith** spoke of the Light Wheel looks at how people live out their faith, how important it is to them, and how their lives are shaped by it. It explores people's commitment to practising their faith regularly and the ways that people rely on their faith in times of difficulty or decision-making. It also looks at how individuals engage in acts of service with their faith group, and how different faith groups work together for the benefit of their community. The **Living faith** themes can be explored from the perspective of any faith.

#### Living faith themes

- **Importance of faith:** how significant and meaningful people feel their faith is to them
- **Personal practice:** the ways individuals engage in strengthening or living out their faith
- **Reliance on faith:** how someone's faith affects their decision-making or comforts them in times of difficulty
- **Acts of service:** the ways that faith prompts a compassionate response to those in need
- **Role of faith institutions:** how faith institutions are perceived by the community, and the part they play in serving community needs
- **Relationships between faith groups:** how well different faith groups interact and collaborate



Below are some specific themes to help Christians and churches reflect on how they are strengthening their faith and how the church is responding to the community's holistic needs.

#### Additional Living faith themes for Christians and church groups

- **Growing in discipleship:** the ways Christians engage with their faith by following the teachings of Jesus and demonstrating the fruit of the Spirit, eg generosity, patience, peace
- **Discovering gifts and calling:** how Christians discover the unique way that God has made them, including their abilities and sense of God's will for their life
- **Building relationships in communities:** how Christians act as salt and light in their communities and take action to bring change across all areas of the Light Wheel, including sharing God's good news.



## Social connections

The extent to which we connect with and support each other as a community

This spoke of the Light Wheel looks at how different people connect with each other and support each other in a community. For example, it considers the different groups that people are members of (eg savings groups, farming collectives or recreational groups), how actively they are involved, who can be part of these groups and the benefits of these groups. It looks at how different types of people relate to each other (eg by ethnicity, age, gender, faith, socio-economic status etc), and whether the community seeks to include everyone. If some people are excluded from opportunities, it considers the impact on them. We also look at whether people collaborate together for common goals and what social support networks people access in times of difficulty. This aspect of wellbeing also considers how safe and protected different types of people feel in their community.

### Social connections themes

- **Group membership:** the amount and type of connections and groups that exist in a community, and how actively people participate in them
- **Exclusion/inclusion:** the amount of exclusion that takes place in the community, the reasons why some are included and others are not, and the impact that exclusion has had on people who have experienced it
- **Collaboration:** how well people work together to improve their community
- **Support network:** how supported people feel by those around them in times of difficulty
- **Safety/protection:** how free from danger people feel in their local community



Think about how you can make your Light Wheel activities an example of what it looks like for all people to be welcome, and ensure that the most vulnerable people are included and have a chance to be heard.



## Personal relationships

The love, security and respect we find in marriages, families and close friendships

Personal relationships are deep and private: for example, relationships with family members, spouses and close friends. They differ from social connections, which are more communal and experienced in public. In this spoke of the Light Wheel, we look at the nature and quality of people's personal relationships and the commitment people have to develop and sustain healthy relationships. We consider whether people feel their relationships are based on trust and respect, and how people make decisions and resolve disagreements in their households. We also look at the role close relationships play in personal resilience and wellbeing.

### Personal relationships themes

- **Satisfaction with close relationships:** how satisfied people are with the number and quality of their close relationships
- **Feel respected:** the level of appreciation and dignity people are given by the people closest to them
- **Participation in decision-making:** how able people feel to engage with and influence choices that affect them in their household and family
- **Handling disagreement:** how well individuals manage conflict or differences of opinion within their relationships
- **Trust:** how confident individuals are that the people they are closest to have their best interests at heart



Personal relationships can be a very sensitive topic. Follow the guidance on inclusion, safeguarding and contextualisation in 'Key principles before we start', **Section 2.1**<sup>1</sup> in the Light Wheel toolkit, to ensure that your participants feel safe enough to share, and that your questions are sensitive to your context.

<sup>1</sup> Section 2.1 can be found in **Part 2: Facilitate** of the Light Wheel toolkit at: [learn.tearfund.org/LW2](https://learn.tearfund.org/LW2)



## Participation and influence

Using our voice to influence decision-makers and make our communities a better place

This spoke of the Light Wheel looks at how different types of people feel able to express their views and be involved in making decisions that affect their lives. We consider the freedom that people feel they have to use their voice and share their opinions in different spaces, such as community meetings, local and national government and places of worship. This aspect of wellbeing is concerned with people's perceived agency (how much influence they feel they have) to create changes in their community, as well as their practical knowledge about the steps they need to take to engage with and advocate to decision-makers. In this aspect of wellbeing, we also look at different people's experiences of being listened to – or not – by those in positions of power or authority, and look for examples of how decision-makers have responded to people's needs and requests.

### Participation and influence themes

- **Having a voice:** how able individuals feel to share their views in different public spaces
- **Collective agency:** how strongly people feel that they can create change as a community
- **Participation in influencing change:** how aware people are about how to engage with decision-makers and how actively they work to make a difference to their community or nation
- **Achieving change:** the degree to which people consider decision-makers to be actively responding to their needs and requests



In some contexts, discussion about influencing and accountability could be seen as challenging authority. Consider if you need to make adaptations to discuss this spoke of the Light Wheel in your context. For example, some users have renamed it 'Participation' to make it less contentious.



## Emotional and mental wellbeing

How we feel about ourselves and the opportunities we see in our future

This spoke of the Light Wheel looks at the different factors that impact a person's mental health and emotional resilience, and considers people's overall sense of wellbeing. It considers people's resilience to cope emotionally with responsibilities or difficult situations. For example, it looks at whether people have good emotional support within their personal relationships and if their daily life includes activities that interest and excite them. This aspect of wellbeing also explores how positive people are about the future, even if they have experienced difficult things in the past. We also look at the concept of self-worth and consider how people think about and value themselves as human beings.

### Emotional and mental wellbeing themes

- **Sense of personal wellbeing:** how people feel in their mind and their mood, and whether their daily life is filled with things that interest or excite them
- **Emotional support:** whether people feel they have access to the emotional support they need
- **Coping with stress:** an individual's ability to cope with burdens or difficulties in their lives
- **Hope for the future:** how positive people feel about the future and believe it can be better than the past
- **Sense of self-worth:** how people see their own value as a human being



Talking about mental health is a very private and personal matter, and understandably this is often the aspect of wellbeing that people find hardest to discuss. Using the guidance on 'Safeguarding' in **Section 2.1.2<sup>2</sup>** of the Light Wheel toolkit to guide you, think about how you can help make people feel comfortable about sharing on this topic, and explain why talking is so important.

<sup>2</sup> Section 2.1.2 can be found in **Part 2: Facilitate** of the Light Wheel toolkit at: [learn.tearfund.org/LW2](https://learn.tearfund.org/LW2)



## Physical health

Looking after our bodies and having access to good-quality health services

This spoke of the Light Wheel looks at the different factors that are important to maintain good physical health. It looks at how healthy individuals are, how often people fall sick and what the common illnesses are in the community. It considers how easy it is for people to access healthcare, the different obstacles people experience in accessing treatment, and the quality of the treatment available. We explore individuals' knowledge of good health behaviours, such as drinking clean water, handwashing and sanitation, and the importance of a varied diet, and how well they are able to put this knowledge into practice.

### Physical health themes

- **Access to safe water:** how far people travel to access water and how safe it is to drink the water they access
- **Hygiene and sanitation:** how knowledgeable people are about preventative health behaviours (hygiene, handwashing, sanitation) and how frequently these are practised
- **Health status:** how often people get sick and the common illnesses people fall ill with
- **Access to and quality of healthcare:** where people go for treatment, any barriers they experience in accessing healthcare, and how satisfied people are with the quality of the healthcare they receive
- **Balanced diet:** how knowledgeable people are about what constitutes a balanced diet and how balanced their diet actually is



It's important that our discussions about health are accessible to people who have poor health or who live with disabilities, so that they can share their perspectives. What they need to live a full life may be very different from other people's needs. The guidance on 'Inclusion' in **Section 2.1.1**<sup>3</sup> of the Light Wheel toolkit will help you ensure that you take the necessary practical steps to allow them to attend your discussion in comfort.

<sup>3</sup> Section 2.1.1 can be found in **Part 2: Facilitate** of the Light Wheel toolkit at: [learn.tearfund.org/LW2](https://learn.tearfund.org/LW2)



## Material assets and resources

Using our creativity to make the most of our resources, make new resources, and share our resources with others

This spoke of the Light Wheel looks at the material assets and resources that people own or have access to. It looks at whether or not people have access to land and if they have proof of ownership. It considers people's ability to earn a living, save money, have enough to eat, and pay for other essential household needs. It considers the resilience of people's resources, such as the mechanisms people can access to cope with unexpected costs or shocks, and whether these mechanisms are positive (such as having access to financial services) or negative (such as having to sell assets or cut back on food). This aspect of wellbeing also considers people's attitude towards their resources, such as their creativity to make the most of what is available, and people's willingness to share their resources with others.

### Material assets and resources themes

- **Land access and ownership:** whether or not people have access to land and if they have formal ownership of that land or dwelling
- **Food security:** whether or not people have access to sufficient food for their household throughout the year
- **Income and savings:** how diverse people's income sources are and if it is possible for them to put money into savings regularly
- **Coping mechanisms:** the ways in which individuals and households cope with shocks or stresses. These can be positive (eg insurance or government benefits) or negative (eg selling off assets or taking loans with high interest rates)
- **Financial inclusion:** whether or not people have access to formal financial services (eg a savings bank account, formal credit and insurance)
- **Attitudes towards resources:** people's ability to identify and use available resources to achieve their goals, and how willing people are to share what they have



People's access to material assets and resources is often determined by their gender, age, ability, class and other factors. It is important to disaggregate your data along these lines to understand how access to and use of resources differ for different groups.



## Capabilities

Developing and using our gifts and skills to make a living, serve others, and bring about positive change in our lives

This spoke of the Light Wheel considers the skills and knowledge individuals have to achieve what they want with their lives: for example, to improve their quality of life, earn an income, stay healthy or help others. It explores the mindset changes that help individuals to have ambition and vision for their futures and how capable people feel to create changes in their lives and reach their goals. Within this aspect of wellbeing, we also explore the current skills that individuals have and how people can develop new skills or share their knowledge with others. This includes looking at access to formal education, the number of children who are in school, the barriers that prevent them from attending, and the quality of education they receive.

### Capabilities themes

- **Ambition/vision:** the dreams people have for their future and their willingness to work for what they hope to achieve
- **Individual agency:** how capable people feel to make the changes they want to see in their lives
- **Skills development:** the skills and knowledge that individuals have developed to help them reach their goals or improve the life of their family
- **Knowledge transfer:** how willing people are to share their skills and knowledge with others and how often they get the opportunity to do this
- **Access to and quality of education:** the number of children who can go to school, the barriers preventing them from attending, and the quality of education they receive



It is important to emphasise that every person is created in the image of God, and therefore has inherent worth, regardless of their education, ability, skill level or social status. Make sure you create a safe space where people feel able to talk about the barriers that make it hard for them to build their capabilities and to make the changes they want to see in their lives.





## Care of the environment

Looking after and enjoying the natural world, easing the risks and protecting resources for future generations

This spoke of the Light Wheel explores the relationship that individuals and communities have with the natural world around them. It explores how aware people are of the changing climate and environmental degradation, and how these changes impact their daily lives. It looks at the adaptations people are making to mitigate the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation, and protect the environment for future generations. This includes, for example, the community's approach to managing waste, recycling, and reducing pollution. It also considers people's awareness of potential disaster risks and whether they are taking actions to reduce those risks. In addition, it looks at whether people feel they have access to the natural resources they need, whether this is a source of conflict, and if people are able to spend time enjoying the environment for wellbeing and leisure.

### Care of the environment themes

- **Awareness of environmental changes:** how informed people are about the connection between environmental degradation, climate change and the challenges they experience
- **Disaster risk reduction:** how prepared communities are for environment-related disasters
- **Adaptations:** what changes people have made to respond to the impacts of environmental degradation and climate change
- **Solid waste management:** how people dispose of their waste (eg waste bins, recycling)
- **Tension over scarcity:** whether scarcity of natural resources is a cause of tension or conflict in the community
- **Access to natural resources:** the availability of natural resources and how these are managed and protected for the future, both as a sustainable resource and a source of enjoyment for people's wellbeing



Disasters, climate change and environmental degradation have a disproportionate effect on the poorest, most vulnerable people. When discussing themes related to care of the environment, don't assume that everyone's experience is the same. For example, people with disabilities are often left out of disaster risk reduction planning so when a crisis occurs, they are not able to access help quickly.